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Testimony of Dennis Cahill before the Connecticut
Legislature's Housing Committee in Opposition to Senate Bill 190
March 8, 2012

I thank the committee for hearing my testimony today. My name is Dennis Cahill and I am a resident of Bridgeport. I testify today as a proud member of the board of the Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network, PHRN. My comments are made on behalf of the members of our organization. PHRN opposes Senate Bill 190.

My residence is a supportive housing building for formerly homeless individuals. It is owned by a private non-profit corporation. I am a member of the corporation's board of directors.

Our building has always had monthly roach and mice exterminator visits since opening in 2000. In 2008 there were complaints from about 5 of the 102 residents that they had bed bugs in their apartments. Management responded responsibly by scheduling extra treatments for bugs which consisted of a six week program at a cost of about \$600 per apartment.

During August of 2009, with several more residents complaining and some old problems remaining, management contracted for a bug detecting canine to check all apartments in the building for bed bugs, at a cost of thousands of dollars. The dog found 25 active units with bugs and all other apartments were "surrounders" units, also requiring complete treatment. My apartment received treatment at that time and there was no more problem until September of 2010.

At that time, my mattress and upholstered rocking chair became infested and bugs spread throughout the apartment. Both items were trashed and I've yet to afford replacing the rocking chair. And so, two years after the original resident complaints, I also required the expensive six week treatment program. Since October of 2010, all apartments in the building have continued to receive monthly bed bug treatments.

I have only one point to make in regards to Senate Bill 190. Residents of our building are extremely low income. They receive state or social security disability income and could never cover the cost of these treatments and follow-ups. Without timely treatments, bed bugs spread very far very fast. Passage of Senate Bill 190 would dramatically exacerbate the spread of the bed bug problem, subjecting many clean & meticulous residents like myself to constant bed bug infestation problems because we lived in an apartment next to someone with bed bugs who was not willing or able to pay for bed bug treatments in a timely manner. I urge you to reject Senate Bill 190.

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